

<b>State of Alaska</b> <b>Division of Motor Vehicles</b> <b>Standard Operating Procedures</b>	<b>SOP No. T-1</b>	<b>Page No. 1 of 1</b>
	<b>Effective</b> April 14, 2006	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Supersedes</b> T-1	<b>Dated</b> 2/25/00
<b>INTRODUCTION TO TITLING</b>	<b>Approved</b>	
<b>Statute: AS 28.10.201 - .401      Regulation:</b>	<b>Form No.</b>	

The Division of Motor Vehicles issues a certificate of title as proof of legal ownership of a vehicle and as proof if there is a lien on a vehicle. Every vehicle that is subject to registration is required to have a title and the Division may not register a vehicle unless the owner also applies for a title or provides proof that a title has been previously issued to him/her for that vehicle. The Division does not issue titles for snowmobiles, ATV's (R-135) or boats (See Boat SOP for information on boat registration.)

Every state issues titles for the majority of vehicles that are subject to registration. The main exception to this is for trailers which many states do not title (T-40). The use and purpose of the vehicle title is very similar in every state, including Alaska.

The title provides protection for both the owner and the lienholder, if any. In Alaska only the primary lienholder is recorded on the title and the title is given to the primary lienholder. If there is no lienholder then the title is given to the owner. When a lien is satisfied, the lienholder is required to sign the release on the title and give it to the vehicle owner who should then apply for a new title showing no lien.

When an owner sells a vehicle they are required to sign the release, complete the assignment on the title, and deliver the title to the new owner. This transfer of a properly released and assigned title is the only legal transfer of a vehicle between private individuals. It is a common misconception that a bill of sale is adequate proof of transfer of ownership of a vehicle. In Alaska, as in most other states, the bill of sale is not legal proof of transfer of ownership according to the law.

The new owner of a vehicle is required to surrender the title and obtain title in his/her name within 30 days. Failure to do so may cause problems and inconvenience for the new owner. If the title is lost the previous owner must obtain a duplicate title before the title can be transferred. If there are other problems the previous owner may need to be notified.

Since the title is the document used to prove legal transfer of ownership, it is considered a negotiable document. The title is treated much the same as a check. Any erasure, cross-out, white-out, or other obliteration may void the title and require that a duplicate title be issued to the original owner. If an owner signs a release on a title but does not complete the assignment, it is much the same as signing a blank check. Any person that gains possession of the title could have a title issued in their name.

Ownership of a vehicle may be transferred without the consent of the owner. Some examples of this type would be an abandoned vehicle, a vehicle that was repossessed by a lienholder, a court order, a towing, storage, or mechanic's lien. The title would not always be available for this type of transfer so other documents may be used. These situations will be addressed in sections of this SOP.

The various sections of this SOP are intended to provide specific detail on all basic aspects of vehicle titling. Alaska statute and regulation references are provided with each section. It is intended that these statutes and regulations be referred to and used by each employee or agent to help the customer understand and comply with the requirements for titling.

Cross reference:

T-040 Non-Title State

R-135 Snow Vehicles (ATV's & Snowmobiles)